

wherein said inner portion has no apertures and is concavely curved to support a vessel having a round or curved bottom;

a¹ wherein said outer portion adjoins said inner portion at an upper location remote from a bottom of said inner portion; and

wherein said outer portion extends away from said upper location of said inner portion toward said base and merges with said base.

Please add the following new claim 17:

a² 17. (New) A heat-conducting support according to claim 1, wherein said heating element is an electrical hot plate having a flat surface.
